



Pawprints

Fall 2013

Scruffy: One Dog's Journey to a New Life



Research shows that homeless animals in America outnumber homeless people 5 to 1. Although counting strays is impossible, it is believed that at any one time, as many as 70 million cats are homeless. While you might imagine that life on the streets is horrifying enough, strays who are captured and taken to shelters have equally slim chances of survival: annually, 6 to 8 million dogs and cats brought to shelters are euthanized.

Whether these strays end up homeless because they slip away from their homes or because they are abandoned makes no difference. The result is usually the same: fighting for survival before almost certain death.

Scruffy could have been one of those statistics, but thanks to GAR's family of volunteers, he now has a new life with a new family.

One night this past summer, this truly scruffy terrier mix was dropped off in a family neighborhood. He was covered in fleas and suffered from a wound on his ear (top left). Neighbors tried without luck to determine if anyone in the immediate area had lost a pet. In the meantime, they kept him safe, treated his fleas, fed him, and housed him.

Finally, one of the neighbors contacted GAR, whose volunteers sprang into action and found a foster home for Scruffy. On July 18, flea-free and fully healed, he joined eight other dogs -- including a mama terrier and her babies! -- six cats, and two GAR volunteers on a five-hour trip (middle left) to a large "rescue ranch" in Northern Virginia. Due to the lack of rescue facilities in Southwestern Virginia, GAR often takes animals to this ranch, which then makes sure they are adopted into good homes.

At the ranch, the gaggle of Giles County puppies immediately began running and playing in their large fenced yard (below left), jumping in and out of a swimming pool and generally being silly. The cats joined those already lounging in a large private house (below, middle), where beds, toys, and climbing towers waited. All would be fed, petted, and taken care of until they could be adopted.

Like most of the animals accepted at this rescue ranch, Scruffy (getting used to his temporary shelter, below, right) was quickly adopted and today has a new chance at life in a loving home.



GAR: Shorter Name, Stronger Mission

We have a new name, *Giles Animal Rescue, Inc.*, but have not and will never change our foremost mission to help save animals in Giles County. Our mission has always been to help homeless, abandoned, and neglected pets; to provide education and spay/neuter assistance; and to advocate pet-related issues.

Since 1999, our volunteers spent every weekend at the county shelter, providing its only open public hours. We are relieved that the county has decided to staff the shelter, to keep open hours as required by State statutes, although it has come at a cost.

We miss getting to know the shelter pets and advocating for or arranging their rescue/adoption. We still encourage people to adopt from local shelters. We fervently hope that the shelter animals are getting rescued or adopted.

We have decided to remove "County" from our name in an attempt to clarify: we no longer have a formal relationship with the county operated pound. With our group's assistance over

the years, the shelter's death rate was reduced from 100% to around 15% for dogs and nearly 50% for cats; however, we never operated the shelter, which is a common misperception.

We continue to rescue increasing numbers of pets from owners who do not want their pet or a stray they found to go to the shelter, which is a high-kill facility. We continue to make "rescue runs," transporting animals all over the state, and frequent shorter runs to various vets' offices. We continue to expand our foster program, volunteer base, home checks, emergency vet care, spay-neuter programs, vaccination clinics, and rescue networks.

We continue to have wonderful support from all the local veterinarians. We are reaching more people than ever, using social media, in our efforts to tackle the pet population problem. We remain a 501c(3) non-profit animal welfare organization with tax deduction status. We continue to be totally dependent
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Visit our web site at <http://www.gilesanimalrescue.org> and "Like" us on Facebook!

GAR Fosters Bring Hope to the Homeless

In her online article "8 Reasons Why You Should Foster Animals," Roslyn Ayers says that "fostering animals is, simply put, saving lives." Even before its break from the county shelter, Giles Animal Rescue maintained a thriving foster program. Today, GAR's rescue mission depends upon the dedication of that network of volunteers.

One of GAR's long-time foster moms is Laura Lawson, who has opened her home to countless cats. Laura fosters because it makes her happy. "I get to meet a lot of characters!" she says.

But she also notes two other key reasons that fostering is a vital part of any rescue operation. First, fostering also provides a chance to educate people about the good work that rescue organizations do. "It's an opportunity," she says, "to make a difference in the lives of the animals."

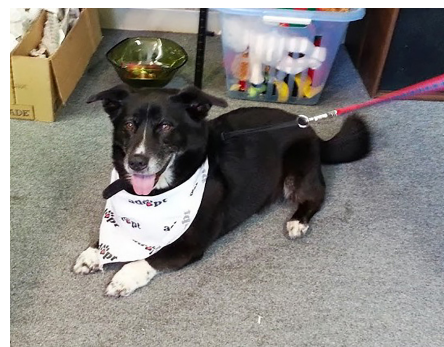
Second, in a home setting, rather than in a shelter, all animals behave more normally. "I enjoy working with cats and kittens and seeing how they respond in a home situation," she says. "Their personalities really come out."

Knowing how animals will respond in different situations – such as with other animals, with children, and around food – helps rescue organizations create behavioral profiles. These profiles in turn help potential adopters figure out which animal would fit best in their own home.



Laura Lawson with some of her fosters.

GAR's Foster Program needs both fosters and supplies, including dry food, especially kitten and puppy chow; old or new bath towels; beds, crates, or cages; food bowls; and leashes and collars. If you would like to foster or donate, please email gilesanimalrescue@gmail.com.



Special GAR Success Stories

Since the last issue of *Pawprints*, four dogs special to GAR hearts have found loving homes.

Carlos (above left) had been in foster care for months. He had the disposition of a kitten, but because he was a pit bull it was hard to convince potential adopters that he was gentle and sweet. After he appeared at the Palisades Father's Day Bash, though, he was finally adopted!

Miss Sandy (above middle) attended the same Father's Day Bash. A young shepherd mix, she was a bit high-spirited and silly, but just as sweet as Carlos. Soon after the bash, Sandy was adopted as well.

In June, Feetso's (above right, top) owner died and the family contacted GAR for help. He had a broken heart, but with the love and care of our wonderful foster homes, he quickly mended. After several weeks, Feetso was well enough to travel to a rescue where he was put up for adoption.

In August, GAR rescued Jasper (above right, bottom), a 9-month-old puppy whose owner moved and abandoned him. He had lived his entire life at the end of a short chain. He was placed with a rescue, neutered, and vaccinated. Now he has a new, loving home.



GAR Continues Saving Lives

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on the support and good will of our sponsors and donors.

If you are forced by circumstance to give up your pet, or you know of a pet in need, or you would like to assist us in our continued fight on their behalf, please contact us at 540-922-3958 or email, gilesanimalrescue@gmail.com. Animals surrendered to GAR will find their way to a no-kill rescue or will be adopted through us. They WILL find new homes with a loving family.

Because there has been some misinformation associated with our name change, please feel free to contact GAR President Christine Link-Owens, or any of our volunteers if you have questions.

Finally, please join us and support our message, "The Best Shelter is a Caring Community which promotes Adoption, Spay/Neuter, and Education." Together, we can make that happen. And we hope you like our new logo!

Contact GAR:

gilesanimalrescue@gmail.com

540.922.3958

P.O. Box 354 Pearisburg, VA 24134

UPCOMING EVENTS

GAR YARD SALES

11/2 & 12/7 (weather permitting) and beginning March 1st, the 1st Saturday of each month in 2014. We accept donations anytime; to arrange a time for drop-off, or if you would like to come out and bring a table and have your own yard sale, please contact Christine. 540-626-7409

SILENT AUCTION

PALISADES RESTAURANT

Eggleston

11/30 5-9 pm

Come out and enjoy good food & good company, all for a good cause. Reservations highly recommended but not necessary. Please contact Palisades at 540-626-2828 to reserve a table.